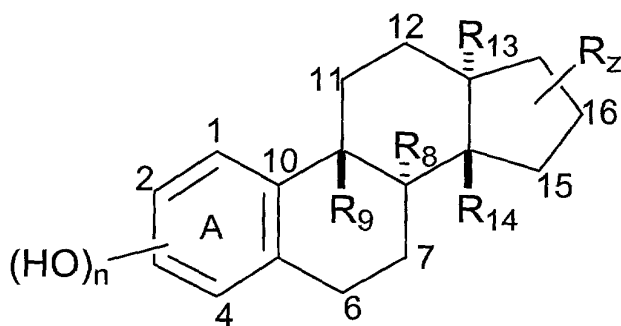


What is claimed is:

1. A process for treating a cytodegenerative disease comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a compound having cytoprotective activity of the formula (I), or a diastereomer configuration thereof:



(I)

wherein

the compound optionally has one or more unsaturated bonds in conjugation with the aromatic A-ring between carbons 6 and 7, 8 and 9, or 9 and 11, in which event one or both of R^8 and R^9 will be absent;

n ranges from 1 to 4;

R^8 and R^9 , when present, are independently hydrogen or alkyl;

R^{13} is hydrogen, substituted or unsubstituted hydrocarbyl, halo, amido, sulfate or nitrate;

R^{14} is hydrogen or alkyl;

R^z is hydrogen, hydroxy, oxo, substituted or unsubstituted hydrocarbyl, heterocycloalkyl, heterocycloalkenyl, halo, amido, sulfate, or nitrate; and,

carbon 17 and carbon 3 are not each hydroxy-substituted when (i) n is 1, (ii) the compound does not contain at least

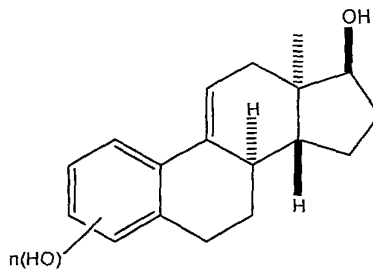
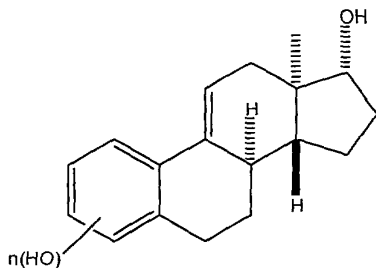
one unsaturated bond in conjugation with the aromatic A-ring,
(iii) R^8 , R^9 and R^{14} are hydrogen, and (iv) R^{13} is methyl.

2. The process of claim 1 wherein a carbon-carbon double bond is present in the compound between carbons 9 and 11.

3. The process of claim 2 wherein R^8 and R^{14} are hydrogen and R^{13} is methyl.

4. The process of claim 3 wherein R^z is hydroxy.

5. The process of claim 4 wherein the compound is selected from:



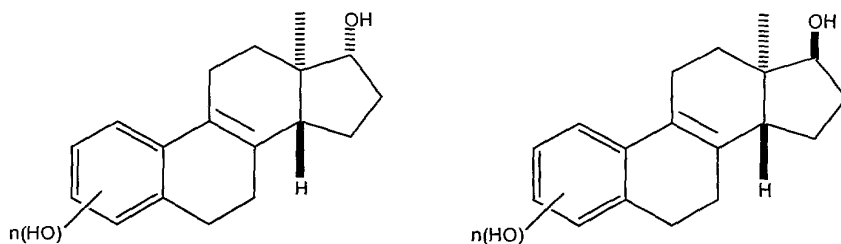
wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

6. The process of claim 1 wherein a carbon-carbon double bond is present in the compound between carbons 8 and 9.

7. The process of claim 6 wherein R^{14} is hydrogen and R^{13} is methyl.

8. The process of claim 7 wherein R^z is hydroxy.

9. The process of claim 8 wherein the compound is selected from:



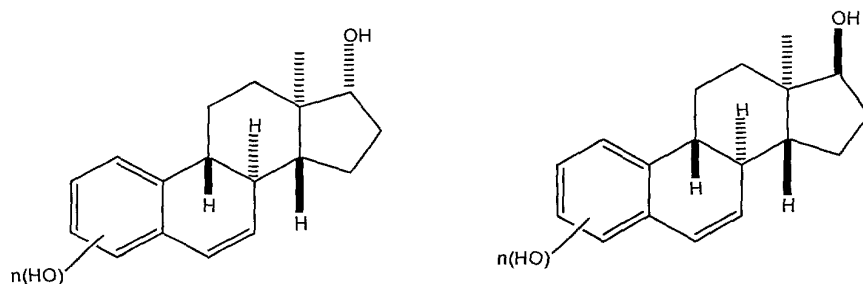
wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

10. The process of claim 1 wherein a carbon-carbon double bond is present in the compound between carbons 6 and 7.

11. The process of claim 10 wherein R^8 , R^9 and R^{14} are hydrogen and R^{13} is methyl.

12. The process of claim 11 wherein R^z is hydroxy.

13. The process of claim 12 wherein the compound is selected from:



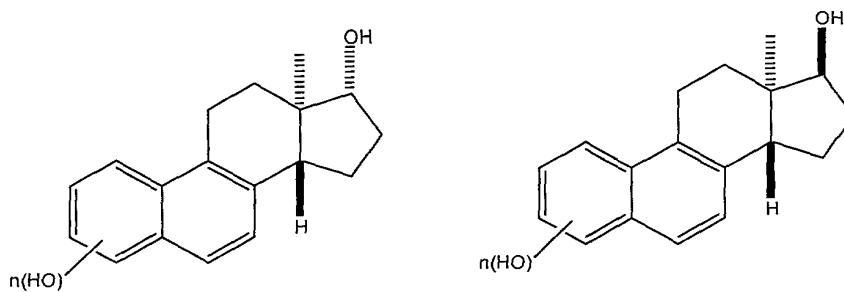
wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

14. The process of claim 1 wherein a carbon-carbon double bond is present in the compound between carbons 6 and 7 and 8 and 9.

15. The process of claim 14 wherein R^{14} is hydrogen and R^{13} is methyl.

16. The process of claim 15 wherein R^z is hydroxy.

17. The process of claim 16 wherein the compound is selected from:

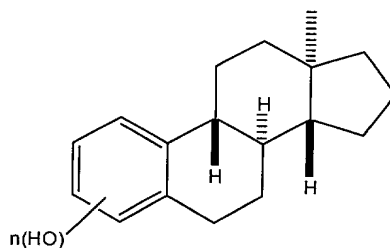


wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

18. The process of claim 1 wherein R^8 , R^9 and R^{14} are hydrogen and R^{13} is methyl.

19. The process of claim 18 wherein R^z is hydrogen.

20. The process of claim 19 wherein the compound is:

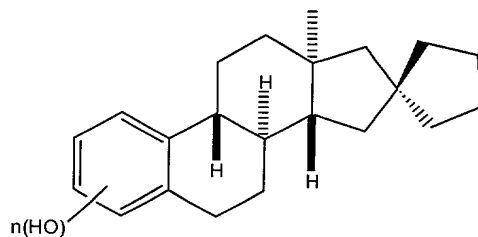


wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

21. The process of claim 18 wherein R^z is cycloalkyl or cycloalkenyl.

22. The process of claim 21 wherein R^z is a spiro structure, a carbon in the D-ring of the compound also being a carbon in the cyclic R^z substituent.

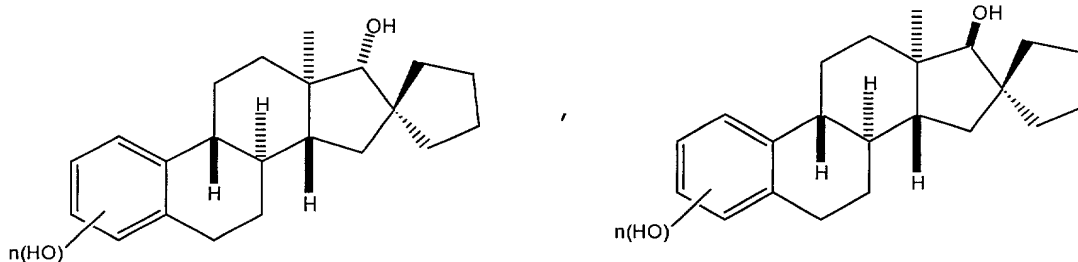
23. The process of claim 22 wherein the compound is:



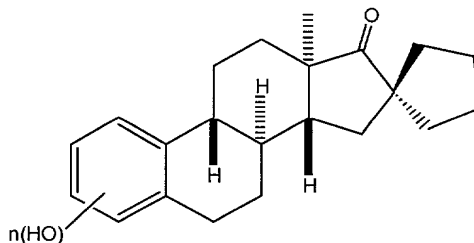
wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

24. The process of claim 23 wherein the D ring is additionally substituted with a hydroxy group or an oxo group.

25. The process of claim 24 wherein the compound is selected from:



or,



wherein n is as defined in claim 1.

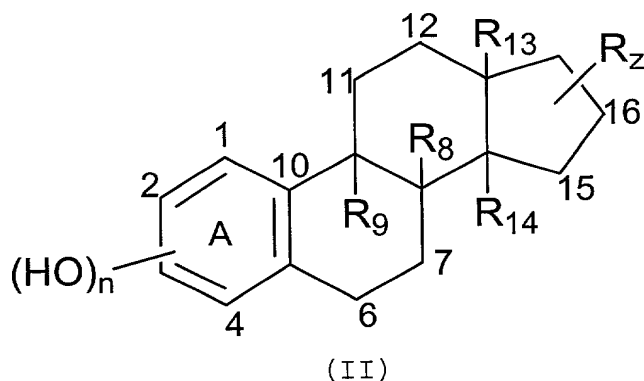
26. The process of claim 1 comprising administering a pharmaceutical composition comprising said compound and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, excipient or diluent.

27. The process of claim 1 wherein said subject is an animal.

28. The process of claim 1 wherein said subject is a human.

29. A process for treating a cytodegenerative disease comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a

compound having cytoprotective activity of formula (II), or a stereoisomeric configuration thereof:



wherein

the compound optionally has one or more unsaturated bonds in conjugation with the aromatic A-ring between carbons 6 and 7, 8 and 9, or 9 and 11, in which event one or both of R^8 and R^9 will be absent;

n ranges from 1 to 4;

R^8 and R^9 , when present, are independently hydrogen or alkyl;

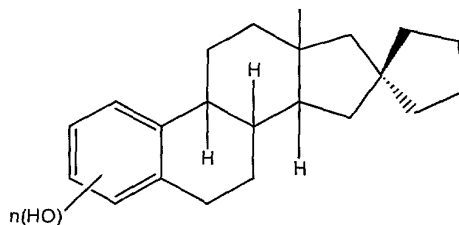
R^{13} is hydrogen, substituted or unsubstituted hydrocarbyl, halo, amido, sulfate or nitrate;

R^{14} is hydrogen or alkyl;

R^z is substituted or unsubstituted cycloalkyl or cycloalkenyl, or substituted or unsubstituted heterocycloalkyl or heterocycloalkenyl.

30. The process of claim 29 wherein R^z is a spiro structure, a carbon in the D-ring of the compound also being a carbon in the cyclic R^z substituent.

31. The process of claim 30 wherein the compound is:



wherein n is defined in claim 29.

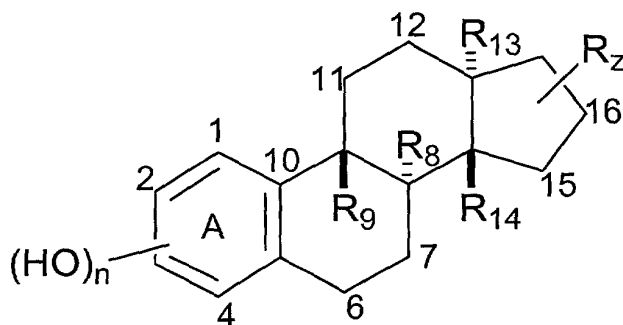
32. The process of claim 31 wherein the compound has the configuration $\text{R8}\alpha$, $\text{R9}\beta$, $\text{R13}\alpha$, and $\text{R14}\beta$.

33. The process of claim 31 wherein the compound has the configuration $\text{R8}\beta$, $\text{R9}\alpha$, $\text{R13}\beta$, and $\text{R14}\alpha$.

34. The process of claim 29 wherein the compound has the configuration $\text{R8}\alpha$, $\text{R9}\beta$, $\text{R13}\alpha$, and $\text{R14}\beta$.

35. The process of claim 29 wherein the compound has the configuration $\text{R8}\beta$, $\text{R9}\alpha$, $\text{R13}\beta$, and $\text{R14}\alpha$.

36. A compound having cytoprotective activity, the compound having the formula (I), or a diastereomeric configuration thereof:



(I)

5 wherein

the compound optionally has one or more unsaturated bonds in conjugation with the aromatic A ring between carbons 6 and 7, 8 and 9, or 9 and 11, in which event one or both of R^8 and R^9 will be absent;

10 n ranges from 1 to 4;

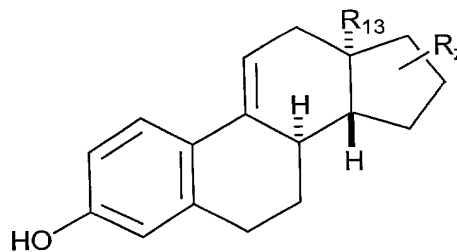
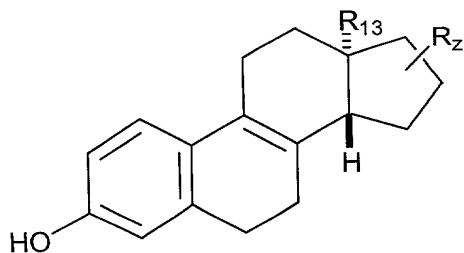
R^8 and R^9 , when present, are independently hydrogen or alkyl;

R^{13} is hydrogen, substituted or unsubstituted hydrocarbyl, halo, amido, sulfate or nitrate;

15 R^{14} is hydrogen or alkyl;

R^Z is hydrogen, hydroxy, oxo, substituted or unsubstituted hydrocarbyl, heterocycloalkyl, heterocycloalkenyl, halo, amido, sulfate, or nitrate, provided however, when (i) the compound does not contain at least one unsaturated bond in conjugation with the aromatic A-ring, (ii) R^8 , R^9 and R^{14} are hydrogen, and (iii) R^{13} is methyl, R^Z is other than hydrogen and is not hydroxy or oxo when the D-ring is only substituted at carbon 17.

37. The compound of claim 36 wherein, when the compound has one of the following structures:



wherein R¹³ is methyl and R^z is other than hydroxy.

38. The compound of claim 37 wherein R^z is cycloalkyl or cycloalkenyl.